

INHUMAN

Written by

Steffan Ralph DelPiano

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steffanralphdelpiano@gmail.com
201-388-3174

A guttural, contemptuous whisper hovers on the edge of perception. And then another. And another. Each adds infinitesimally to the volume.

BEGIN TITLE SEQUENCE

Another whisper. And a dozen more. A dozen dozen. Swells. Infects everything it touches. The inhuman noise grows oceanic in its scope.

Just as it is about to overwhelm us, *become us...*

INT. SEDAN - DAY

A single, angelic soprano. Her voice hits registers to which men pray. Sings church music.

A gloved hand, black leather, on the steering wheel.

EXT. SEDAN - DAY

Tinted windows. Wends through a Polish neighborhood.

True blue collar housing. Delis offer lotto and perogies. A church on every corner--each more glorious than the last.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Two MEN, one WOMAN. All in black. Never a face. Only pieces. Shards. Reflections. Caught in mirrors.

Driver. Female passenger. A man in the back.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Pulls to a stop outside SEKORA'S--a religious speciality store.

They exit, head for the front door. Each in a trench coat. One carries a suitcase.

In the storefront window their full reflections stare back at them--as if finally confirming their identities.

MONSIGNOR RITTER (65), an academic with coke-bottle glasses, carries the suitcase. Leads the two inside.

SISTER COLLETTE (49), a hard line, orthodox nun.

And, FATHER BRYANT (55), a lamb amongst wolves.

END TITLES

INT. SEKORA'S - CONTINUOUS

A bell above the front door marks the clergy's entrance.

The CLERK--a community college type--shivers at their arrival. On a shelf behind him, Eastern-European tchotchkes collect dust: troikas, stacking dolls...

None of the clergy make eye contact. They stride, without affect, past displays of unity candles and literature on the Catholic saints to a

WOODEN DOOR

Ritter knocks. A few seconds later a series of locks are unbolted from the other side. It opens.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Boxes, stacked high. Pushed to the side.

In the middle of the room is a PRISONER (a teenage boy). His hands are bound behind his back. A sack over his head.

As the clergy enter they step into a different world.

Maybe it's the bare lights, but everything in the room is drenched in a SEPIA-TONE. Even the three other people there:

DIMITRY (40s), Sekora's shrewd owner. A man whose whitened teeth and Armani speak to dreams of municipal office.

The PRISONER'S AUNT, (54). A broad-shouldered Polish woman who stands a few feet from her nephew. Wants to console him, but doesn't; and knows she shouldn't.

The PRISONER'S UNCLE, (57). Old world stoicism muffles his growing concern for--and fear of--his nephew.

Ritter moves toward the Prisoner.

RITTER

No. Who said to do this?

Ritter rips off the hood.

PETER (19)--the prisoner--just blinks. He's long and sinewy. There's a desperate, rabidness in his eyes--not bestial though... It's too intelligent for that.

DIMITRY

(thick Polish accent)

We didn't know how long you'd be.

Ritter inspects a welt next to Peter's eye. Peter's Aunt's shame festers like a wound.

DIMITRY (CONT'D)

He tried to bite me.

Peter smiles to himself.

RITTER

I told you not to touch him.

DIMITRY

Don't play these games. We all
know what he's done.

Dimitry taunts Peter with a ruby topped ring.

DIMITRY (CONT'D)

He's lucky he only got the ring.

Dimitry smiles deviously. White teeth flash.

Peter whispers something in a guttural tongue.

Bryant takes a fearful step back.

Blood streams from Dimitry's gums. In between each of his
teeth a tiny rivulet. Dimitry doesn't notice until--blood
drips on his hand.

Brings his fingers up to inspect... But, his teeth begin to
fall out of his mouth--roots and all.

Drop into a sticky, crimson rush that spills down his suit
and widens at his feet. *Trop. Trop. Troptroptrop.*

All at once--

Dimitry SCREAMS something indistinguishable. Peter's Aunt
cries out. Peter's Uncle unleashes a vitriol in POLISH.

Bryant looks like he might bolt. Collette stays him.

BLACK BLOOD pulses through Peter's jugular vein. He turns
his attention from Dimitry to his Uncle. Begins to whisper
in his daemonic tongue--

But Ritter steps forward, Bible in hand, CHANTS in LATIN.

PETER'S EYES

Roll into the back of his head, violently. His head twitches.

O.S. Ritter chants.

As we PAN OUT...

A transparent face is superimposed onto Peter's.

It's SIMON'S (39).

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Continue PAN OUT to reveal--

Simon watches the exorcism on a beat-up television. Ritter's voice streams out of the speakers. So do Peter's Aunt's sobs.

RITTER
 (on the screen)
 We're just in time. Only a few
 parts of his soul remain intact.

Simon lowers the volume with a clunky remote, turns to address his visitors: Ritter, Collette, and Bryant.

Collette and Bryant stand behind Ritter, fearful almost.

Simon's office is like someone's mind--cluttered, but with an underlying sense of order... somewhere under the mess.

Leather-bound books on Psychology and Psychiatry line the walls. A manuscript with vast annotations is strewn about.

Simon, a self-assured PhD/MD, eyes the clergy up. He was unimpressed with what he saw on the tape. To be honest, the only thing that *does* impress Simon... is Simon.

RITTER (CONT'D)
 This is a new rite of exorcism
 developed by a Spanish priest.

MUTED on the TV, Ritter mouths at a convulsing Peter.

RITTER (CONT'D)
 Where we engage in direct
 communication with the possessed's
 soul.

Simon stares at Ritter incredulously.

SIMON
 And... I'm sorry. How do I fit
 into this?

RITTER
 We felt that you might have some
 insight into the boy's condition.

SIMON
 If I had to take a Harvard-educated
 guess into his condition I'd say
 you were looking at a case of
 severe Oppositional Defiance
 Disorder. Simple as that.

RITTER
And the teeth?

SIMON
Video editing software?
Gingivitis? Look, everyone, I
appreciate the visit, but--

Collette points to the TV. On the SCREEN she flanks Ritter.

COLLETTE
What you're watching is happening.
His soul is possessed.

SIMON
A soul's never been measured,
recorded. I don't even know what
one is, let alone believe in them.

BRYANT
The soul houses all the
metaphysical parts of a human
being.

SIMON
With all due respect, Father; where
I come from, we call that the mind.

RITTER
With all due respect, Doctor; then
you need to get out more often.
Unlike the mind--the soul is
perfect and infinite.

SIMON
Sounds like a fairy tale. This
isn't what I do.

Simon gestures towards the

SCREEN

Still MUTED. Peter stares into oblivion, silently.

RITTER (O.S.)
This exorcism is only partially
successful. Instead of driving the
demon out, it--it burrowed deep
into the soul and triggered a
series of defense mechanisms that
we can't get beyond.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon's hand is on the annotated manuscript. Its title:
 "Breaking Through: Defense Mechanisms and the Teenage Mind".

SIMON

I don't know which of my colleagues
 sent you an advanced copy, but--

RITTER

Doctor, we came because your
 reputation precedes you--because
 this is what you do. You know
 defense mechanisms better than
 anyone else we can hope to find.

SIMON

I understand that, but you come
 into my office talking about
 infinity and perfection. Defense
 mechanisms are manifestations of
 the mind. Not the soul.

A tap at the door. Through the beveled glass: a silhouette
 with dark, flowing hair.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Come in.

ALEXIS (28), Simon's feisty grad assistant, enters, leaves
 the door open. She's the type to act first and ask questions
 maybe later.

ALEXIS

Simon, group is about-- Oh!

SIMON

Alexis, this is Monsignor Ritter,
 Sister Collette, and Father Bryant.
 This is Alexis, my assistant.

The three nod 'hello.'

ALEXIS

D'you want me to start the--

SIMON

No, I was just about to say goodbye
 to--

Ritter realizes he's about to get the boot; his final plea:

RITTER

Maybe this boy wakes up and
 everything is fine. But, who
 knows? A year from now? Five
 years later? Twenty years later?
 He has a family, kids of his own--
 and the demon wakes. What then?

SIMON
That's what he has you for.

RITTER
I can't play doctor to the soul.

SIMON
And you want me to minister to the
mind.

A tense stare down. Alexis breaks it.

ALEXIS
Well, I guess, I'll just start
heading ov--

SIMON
I'm coming. I'd love to play
semantics with you more; but, I
think our conversation has ended.
Here's your DVD back.

RITTER
Keep it for yours--

Simon hits eject, slides the disk back into its paper sheath.
Offers it back to Ritter. Ritter waves it off.

Simon shrugs, tosses it onto the quagmire that is his desk.

SIMON
I'm sorry I couldn't be of more
assistance to you.

Simon holds out his hand to shake Ritter's. But, Ritter
doesn't offer his. He just turns.

As the three exit, they remain physically and emotionally
distant from Simon and Alexis. After they're gone.

ALEXIS
What the hell was that all about?

Simon mumbles a response meant to mean 'don't ask' as he
tosses the DVD into the garbage.

They start to leave. Almost outside the office... Simon
pivots sharply.

SIMON
Almost forgot.

He reaches for his portable VOICE RECORDER. Simon is never
without it. He plops it into his pocket. They turn to go.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Did you pass around my manuscript
and not tell me?

ALEXIS

No.

Simon pulls the voice recorder out of his pocket. Checks the
clock hanging over the door, and hits RECORD.

SIMON

(into recorder)

Tuesday. 12:07 PM. Figure out how
Monsignor Ritter learned about my
book.

INT. GROUP THERAPY ROOM - AFTERNOON

A Spartan classroom. Chalkboard. Easel and oversized pad of
paper. Scuffed white and green linoleum underfoot.

Six PATIENTS (14-17) sit in chairs arranged in a circle;
Simon and Alexis among them.

Frotterurism. Antisocial Personality Disorder. Narcissism.
The Patients' emotional problems run the gamut. In spite of
this, the group feels safe under the guidance of Simon.

OCD (16), a fidgety kid with zero confidence has the floor.
Everyone listen intently and compassionately.

OCD

... and I just couldn't--I just
felt that I couldn't deal with it
any more.

SIMON

Your mother?

OCD

My mom. My dad. My sister.
School. My teachers. The other
kids at school. Everything.

SIMON

Did you do anything unusual that
night? Anything different?

A pause. Then, OCD mumbles a response.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You have to speak louder so the
group can hear.

A moment for OCD to summon the courage.

OCD
I started with the matches.

SIMON
You started playing with matches.
What about the matches made you
feel better?

Tears pour down OCD's face. No answer. Simon leans in.

OCD
I wanna be done.

Simon makes eye contact with OCD, lends him some strength.

SIMON
What about the matches made you
feel better?

OCD
After I started--I mean, I used to
put the fire to my skin 'cause I
wanted to see what it would smell
like. I dunno--it's just like--it
was just the smell that made
everything--like I could control
anything--finally, you know--even
though it hurt.

SIMON
And what happened the day your
sister found you?

BOOM! From behind. Everyone jumps, turns.

VICTOR (17) stands defiantly, his hand still on the door he
just blasted open. A hooded sweatshirt keeps most of his
chiseled face hidden from the world. But not his eyes.

They judge. And people, trapped in their gaze, feel it.

VICTOR
I'm new. They said to come here.

ALEXIS
There're seats there.

She points to some chairs along the side of the room.

SIMON
Close the door. We're in the
middle of something.

Victor grabs a chair, slides in between Simon and Alexis.

Alexis shoots a frustrated look at Simon; but, he's too busy redirecting OCD to notice her fiery glance.

SIMON (CONT'D)
I'll ask again. What happened the day your sister found you?

OCD
I was in the attic--which is where I started to do it before and--and there's all that pink stuff.

Victor stares at OCD as he talks. It doesn't go unnoticed. OCD can't not look back. His focus begins to shift.

OCD (CONT'D)
... and so then my--uh--my sister came up I guess because she was bored. She was only seven when it happened and so when she--when she saw me with my shirt off...

His voice trails off. Silence. Simon's confused. Then...

OCD (CONT'D)
Do you mind like not looking right at me?!

VICTOR
I'm just listening.

OCD
And looking at me!

Simon realizes that all momentum has been lost, stands.

SIMON
We saw real progress here today. Let's acknowledge that.

Lame applause from Simon, Alexis, and the rest of the Patients. All except Victor who chuckles to himself.

Rage grows in Alexis as she watches the mockery Victor makes.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - LATER

Simon calmly culls the massive annotated manuscript, adds notations and marginalia with a red pen when needed. Page 214. The final stretch.

His voice recorder, propped up, guides his revisions.

SIMON'S VOICE
 (from voice recorder)
 When confronted with the truth of
 his identity the patient chooses to
 either abandon the defense
 mechanism or retreat further into
 it.

Alexis BARGES into the office.

ALEXIS
 What an asshole!

Simon looks up, then down, continues to work.

Simon's pen flows across the page. Doesn't respond. Just
 his voice from the recorder.

SIMON'S VOICE
 Patients rarely choose the former.
 Instead, like the layered skin of
 an onion, he subconsciously crafts
 a deepening, widening narrative of
 self.

ALEXIS
 Did you hear what I said?!

Simon finishes the paragraph. Carefully.

SIMON'S VOICE
 This layering allows each
 subsequent crisis of identity to be
 warded off with greater ease. For
 defense mechanisms provide the
 patient with three essential
 functions: the manipulation, the
 distortion, and the denial of
 reality.

Just as it seems Alexis will burst with anxiety...

SIMON
 (still editing)
 Yes. Who?

ALEXIS
 Who? The new kid.

Simon stops working for a second, takes a fatherly tone.

SIMON

Alexis, at this moment I'm a
hundred and thirteen pages away
from--

Alexis clicks 'STOP' on the voice recorder.

ALEXIS

I mean, you were doing great work
in there and then the cocky, little
bastard swaggers in like he's the
king of the place and--

Simon, sensing the losing battle, dramatically caps his pen.

SIMON

The only reason that I'm sitting in
front of you right now and I'm not
burnt out teaching in the hallowed
halls of the esteemed Eastern
Indiana College of Pennsylvania is
because I allow myself a heaping
measure of remove.

This elicits only a blank stare.

ALEXIS

What?

SIMON

Am I angry?

ALEXIS

How would I know?

SIMON

Do I look angry?

ALEXIS

No.

SIMON

That's because I'm not.

ALEXIS

Okay?

SIMON

D'you know why I'm not?

ALEXIS

Why?

SIMON
Because I don't care about that
child.

ALEXIS
Because he's an asshole?

SIMON
No. Because, I don't care about
any of the children here.

Not the answer she was expecting.

ALEXIS
Please. That's bullshit, Simon.
Of course you care. You're good at
what you do because you care.

SIMON
I'm great at what I do, precisely,
because I don't care.

Alexis eyes Simon distrustfully.

SIMON (CONT'D)
My book--that has been written and
rewritten four times on this--

Simon points to the voice recorder.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Has the potential to help tens of
thousands of kids the first few
years alone. How many can I help
here? A couple hundred at most if
I spend my entire life doing it?
Alexis, if you want to do something
important you can't spend your time
helping each and every person that
might need you.

Alexis doesn't agree with any of this and her face doesn't
hide this fact.

SIMON (CONT'D)
That's why the only thing that's
important... is this.

He brandishes the voice recorder like a trophy, uncaps his
pen, clicks 'PLAY' and starts back up.

SIMON'S VOICE

It is only when crisis affects the patient in the most primal ways that the truth of identity has any hope of piercing the layered hide of the patient's narrative of self.

Deflated, Alexis has no words, turns to find the door.

A shipping envelope that was propped on the opposite side of the door plops to the ground. Alexis picks it up. She talks louder partially to be heard over the recording and partially to demonstrate her mood.

ALEXIS

You got a package.

Doesn't look up.

SIMON

You mind opening it?

Sure she minds! But, does it anyway, pulls the contents.

ALEXIS

It's a DVD. And a note.

Simon is too engaged in his editing.

SIMON

Do you mind?

In spite of a healthy eye roll, Alexis reads the note.

ALEXIS

"Doctor. We are trying to contact you to continue our discussion concerning the boy, Peter. Enclosed is a DVD of our--"

SIMON

Throw it all away.

ALEXIS

Huh?

Simon leans over with his hand out.

SIMON

Here. Give me.

He takes the DVD and note from her, holds them up.

SIMON (CONT'D)
This. Unimportant.

He tosses the items into the trash, and turns back to his manuscript.

SIMON'S VOICE
And even in those extreme cases the patient must have the wherewithal to admit the truth of identity or the defense mechanisms become so concentrated that the patient will bypass denial outright. To that end, he ceases to have commerce with truth, altogether.

INT. MEETING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Plush leather couch and chairs are surrounded by books of all stripes. Simon sits on the chair; Victor, on the couch.

They're locked in a staring contest.

SIMON
So, Victor, why do you think that you were sent here?

It takes a good ten seconds for Victor to answer. In that time, he gazes at Simon with his penetrating eyes--they're full of contempt.

Simon, unmoved, fiddles with his voice recorder.

VICTOR
I dunno.

SIMON
How does it make you feel that you were sent here?

Again, same pause.

VICTOR
I dunno.

SIMON
What do you hope to get out of your time here?

Silence.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alexis screams at Simon who walks briskly hoping to escape.

ALEXIS
Lamictol? Lamictol! You're going to put him on mood stabilizers!

Simon hasn't got a prayer. He calls back to her, not bothering to turn around.

SIMON
The child is defiant,
uncooperative. I spent over an
hour with him and he didn't say
more than ten words. I'm not
wasting my time--

ALEXIS
Since when did working with
patients become a "waste of time?"

Simon halts, spins to address her. She slams on her brakes.

SIMON
What do you want from me, Alexis?
The boy shows up here with no
paperwork at all. I've got no
medical history to work from.
We're too busy here to--

ALEXIS
Correction, Simon; you're too busy.

She nabs the voice recorder out of Simon's shirt pocket, holds it up like it's damning evidence in a murder trial.

Wounded, Simon grabs the voice recorder out of her hand.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)
When your parents died. Think
about it. If you didn't have a
doctor to work with... Think about
what mighta happened.

SIMON
This isn't about me.

He turns sharply, heads for his office.

She calls to him.

ALEXIS
Let me work with him then. He just
needs to realize that his identity--
how he acts, who he is--is his
choice.

SIMON
The paperwork's already been
submitted.

ALEXIS

Ya know, sometimes you're an arrogant prick!

Suddenly, he turns. This, out of malice.

SIMON

You might want to start thinking about finishing your residency under another doctor.

This stings. Alexis hides it (not so) well.

ALEXIS

Don't worry. I'm already working on it.

She storms off. He turns for his office.

Simon--in his own world--accidentally kicks a package sitting at the base of the door. Pissed off, he picks it up. Enters.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Simon tosses the package aside, grabs a seat at his desk, sets up his work area. Manuscript, voice recorder, trusty red pen.

He fiddles with the printed pages for a bit--can't focus.

Paces. That doesn't work.

Impulsively, he tears open the package, his fingers working hastily, sloppily.

Again a DVD and a note. He puts the DVD aside, opens the note.

His eyes grow worried, fearful.

The note is written in scrawling print.

LETTER

"Please. We need your help. Now."

BACK TO SCENE

Simon eyes the DVD, as if it might jump up and bite him. He unsheathes it, places it on the tray, and hits 'PLAY'.

ON THE SCREEN

A SEPIA-TONED scene again: Ritter in the fore, Peter seated in a chair flanked by Collette and Bryant who hold him steady; Peter's Uncle next to them. Peter's Aunt sobs O.C.

RITTER
 (to Peter's Aunt)
 This prayer creates a protected
 area within your son.

She can barely nod through her cries.

Ritter backs away from the camera (which rests on a tripod), addresses Peter who, still in a trance, stares into space.

RITTER (CONT'D)
 Peter, can you here me? I am going
 to create a space within your soul
 that your possessor cannot
 penetrate. Give us a sign that you
 understand.

Nothing. Ritter, gravely, addresses the other clergy.

RITTER (CONT'D)
 Make sure you hold him secure.

Ritter shares a quick glance with Peter's Uncle meant to say, "Are you Okay with this?" Peter's Uncle nods.

Off to the side, Peter's Aunt pleads with God above. Asks, "Why?" over and over again.

Collette casts a denigrating look her way.

Ritter situates himself in front of Peter, places his hand on Peter's forehead and begins to chant in LATIN.

BACK TO SCENE

A KNOCK on the door startles Simon. He hadn't realized he had been so intrigued.

He turns. Through the beveled glass Simon can only make out a MALE FIGURE that might be...

SIMON
 Monsignor Ritter?

SCREAMS from the television. Simon turns to see

ON THE SCREEN

Peter has pushed Collette off. Ritter is bent forward, blood gushes out of his neck, sprays the floor.

Peter has a large chunk of Ritter's flesh and tissue in his mouth.

Ritter stumbles, grows paler and paler each passing second.

It's bedlam.

BACK TO SCENE

The KNOCK on the door becomes a BANGING.

Simon doesn't turn to address the Male Figure. He calls out as he frantically searches for the remote hidden under waves of annotated manuscript.

SIMON (CONT'D)

One minute!

ON THE SCREEN

Peter's Uncle pushes Bryant out of the way, socks Peter across the jaw, tackles him. They tussle.

Ritter lays on the floor a wreck. Though blood seeps out of his neck though he continues the prayer in LATIN.

Collette and Bryant rush to Ritter's side.

He's dead.

COLLETTE

He didn't finish. He didn't finish.

Bryant looks on in shock. Doesn't know what to think.

Peter's Aunt wails hysterically as Peter and his Uncle wrestle. Collette flashes Peter's Aunt a dirty look.

Bryant rushes to help, awkwardly assists Peter's Uncle.

Underneath his Uncle and Bryant, Peter seethes with anger, mumbles in the contemptuous, guttural tongue.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon finally finds the remote, hits the 'POWER' button.

Simon turns for the door...

But it is already swinging open.

REVEAL that it's Victor.

Simon, caught off guard:

SIMON
You're not allowed to be in this
wing. Does--

Victor brandishes a box cutter.

VICTOR
You ain't getting rid of me that
easily.

Simon tries to back away--has no place to go.

Victor slashes Simon's arm.

SIMON
Help! Someone!

Simon retreats. His hands troll the table for any semblance
of a weapon...

Grabs the voice recorder, swings it at Victor who lunges.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Help!

Victor has the upper hand, knees Simon in the gut, topples
Simon.

Alexis appears at the door. Charges.

ALEXIS
Simon!

Alexis grabs Victor's wrist. They wrestle for the blade.

Simon, tries to assist her... too late.

Victor knocks her back, turns to Simon. Slashes his face--

A BLACK SCREEN

That feels more like death than unconsciousness.

Then... a voice murmuring something unintelligible.

Not the voice from before. This voice is vaguely... human.

The BLACK SCREEN begins lighten.

Turns black to a SEPIA.

The voice is human; though it sounds as if the person is speaking underwater.

Sepia to a DIRTY YELLOW

The voice finally breaks through.

COLLETTE
Can you hear me?

Dirty yellow to a SCREAMING WHITE.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
Can you hear me?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Simon's eyes jet open--he flails and screams and swings his arms and kicks his legs.

COLLETTE/BRYANT
Doctor! Doctor! It's Okay.
You're safe. It's over.

It takes a second for Simon to realize... No attacker.

Only Collette and Bryant. Concern wears heavy on their faces.

Simon, a vicious gash across his stubble-covered face, stares up from a hospital bed at an unforgiving florescent light.

SIMON
Where am I?

Simon REACTS to tubes and wires stuck in him.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Where's Alexis?

A pause. Bryant's and Collette's eyes are thick with grief.

COLLETTE
The boy attacked her after you were
knocked out.

Simon doesn't have the clarity to process this right now.

BRYANT
She--she fought him as best she
could.

Simon stares into space--can't believe this is happening.

COLLETTE
He was just--much--stronger.

SIMON
I need to contact her family.
Someone's got to call her family.
I need to--

BRYANT
Everything's already done.

COLLETTE
We've been trying to get through to
you for a while now.

Simon's brings his hand to his face, feels the beard. She's
not lying.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
We didn't think you were going to
pull to.

SIMON
I saw the video before the attack.
Did Monsignor Ritter survive?

Collette and Bryant grow silent.

COLLETTE
That's why we came, Simon.
Monsignor Ritter was certain you
were the only one that could help
Peter.

Simon shifts painfully in his bed.

SIMON
I don't think I'm in the position
of helping anyone right now.

COLLETTE
Self-pity isn't much of a
motivator, doctor.

BRYANT
You're the only person who can help
the boy. You're the only chance we
have of saving his soul.

Simon balks at the word "soul."

BRYANT (CONT'D)
Call it whatever you want. Mind.
Body. Soul. We need your help.
He needs your help.

COLLETTE

He won't talk to us. He's shut down. We can't get through his defense mechanisms. That's why it has to be you. We need you to get him to talk to us. So that we can exorcize the demon inside.

Simon reaches out, grabs a cup of water with a jittery hand, brings it to his parched lips, and coughs it down.

SIMON

Where is he now?

INT. ALEXIS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Simon, now with a permanent scar across his cheek, runs his finger along a desk full of photos of Alexis and her family.

COLLETTE (V.O.)

We've moved him. To a facility.

Alexis (16) in her prom dress next to beaming DAD and MOM.

Alexis and her LAB/RETRIEVER MIX lounging on a couch.

Alexis in her cap and gown... with Simon. His arm around her.

He breaks off. It's too much.

He's about to leave when out of the corner of his eye he sees a LEATHER SATCHEL with a translucent bow attached.

COLLETTE (V.O.)

It's an old asylum the Church has held onto for cases like Peter's.

Simon inspects the satchel's ID tag. In flowing letters...

ID TAG

"For Simon. There's even a spot for that pretentious voice recorder of yours."

BACK TO SCENE

He smiles, locates the little pocket on the inside of the bag just big enough for the recorder.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Simon packs the leather satchel with books.

SIMON (V.O.)
How extensive is the support staff
there?

The annotated manuscript is on his desk. He's about to leave it behind.

On second thought; Simon turns, jettisons books to make room for the manuscript.

INT. HALLWAY - ASYLUM - AFTERNOON

Simon enters. His footsteps reverberate off the high ceilings.

COLLETTE (V.O.)
I won't lie.

Exposed pipes, wiring, and duct work; as if the building's guts are on display. The pipes have rusted blue and green and the ducts shake and clank as hot air traverses them.

Only a few lights on. No one else around. Ominous.

INT. ADMINISTRATION WING - AFTERNOON

Simon walks down a corridor flanked by offices on either side. No lights on.

COLLETTE (V.O.)
The church doesn't officially
acknowledge the existence of the
building.

That the only noise are the pipes and the hot air and his footfalls begins to un-nerve Simon.

Further down is an open door; a light on inside.

Simon approaches it. Below the small window on the door is taped a piece of paper that reads "Simon" in choppy print.

COLLETTE (V.O.)
So we'll be the only people there.

He enters the office.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - AFTERNOON

A chair and a desk upon which a dead computer takes up too much room. Simon fiddles with the wires before quickly giving up.

An intercom call box is mounted near the light switch.

An uncomfortable looking cot in the middle of the floor.

Though the room is furnished spartanly the items present have small ornate flourishes.

A panoramic picture window lets in tons of natural light.

Simon unpacks his books onto an empty bookshelf.

The ducts jitter.

A missing valve on the radiator lets out steam with a crescendoing *SHUSHSHHHHHHHHHHH* that startles Simon.

Turns back to the books.

But the *SHUSH* keeps coming. Fills Simon's ears.

He looks at the valve quizically-- Grows dizzy.

As the noise grows in strength Simon fights stay to standing.

His lungs contract. Breathing becomes unbearable pain.

Almost goes down.

Right as the steam's release can't seem to get any louder...

Simon looks in the mirror-- Then at his

HANDS

They're SEPIA-TONED.

Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump. Simon's beating heart pounds in his ears. Grows faster every passing second.

Thumpthump. Thumpthump. Thumpthump. ThumpThumpthumpthump.

A pair of handcuff's ensnares his wrists with a CLICK.

Right as the cuffs lock--

Simon SNAPS OUT OF THE VISION.

Finds himself propped up against a table.

Sweat pours down his face. Each choppy breath is a dagger.

BRYANT (O.C.)
(muffled)
Simon? Doctor? Open up.

OFFICE DOOR

Bryant and Collette wave to Simon through the window.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon clears the cobwebs and, as nonchalantly as possible, lets Bryant and Collette in.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
Are you, Okay? You're sweating.

SIMON
I'm-- I guess I just haven't
gotten my feet under me, yet.

The clergy share a knowing glance that Simon doesn't notice.

COLLETTE
We're going to be conducting an
interview with Peter. We wanted to
extend an invitation.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - AFTERNOON

Dimly lit. Gray mold fans out across the padded walls.

Peter is on his knees, head slumped forward. He's in a straitjacket.

Attached to the jacket is a heavy chain fastened to the floor.

Peter looks like a torture victim. Collette and Bryant circle him like carrion-feeders. Never too close.

COLLETTE
Peter. Let's get things straight
here, son. If you don't talk to us
you're going to find yourself in
this position a long time.

Simon, who sits in a wooden chair off to the side, furiously jots notes on a clipboard so that he doesn't have to look up.

BRYANT
Just help us. All we need you to
do is talk to us. We can't help
you if you don't talk to us. Tell
us how to help you.

Peter looks up, stares Bryant down.

COLLETTE

Look at me. I'm not afraid of
what's inside of you.

BRYANT

If the thing in you is too strong,
just give us a sign. Show us what
we can do to make it easier for
you.

COLLETTE

If you can act, but don't... our
Lord doesn't forgive the weak
spirited.

BRYANT

We want to get the thing out. But,
you have to help us get at it. We
can't do this alone.

COLLETTE

Stop playing these games. I'm not
your aunt. I know you can talk.
If your not going to--

Peter turns--looks at Collette and spits at her.

Collette and Bryant jump back as if it were a contagion.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

I know you can talk! Mark my
words: God will not forgive you.
You will rot in hell. There will
be eternal darkness and the
gnashing of teeth.

Peter bolts upright, charges Collette.

Simon REACTS. Dives, catches and restrains Peter--just as
the chain that binds him snaps taut.

CLOSE ON Peter's face as he spews the contemptuous whisper
uncontrollably.

INT. ADMINISTRATION WING - LATER

CLOSE ON Simon's face as he spews vitriol.

SIMON

What the hell was that?!

The clergy look back at Simon guiltily, but don't answer.

SIMON (CONT'D)
No wonder he won't speak to you.

BRYANT
He won't speak to us because the demon w--

COLLETTE
You saw it in there. He can speak if he wanted to.

SIMON
Aggression like what you exhibited is the strongest way to reinforce defense mechanisms.

BRYANT
We've tried different tacts, Doctor. None of them worked.

SIMON
And why is he being kept chained up like that? Who told you to do that to him?

COLLETTE
If you want to unshackle him then unshackle him. You'll get no objection from us.

SIMON
I didn't ask that. I asked who told you to do that to him?

No answer seems forthcoming.

SIMON (CONT'D)
So?

COLLETTE
So what do we do next?

SIMON
We?! We don't do anything next. From now on, I conduct the interviews.

Collette and Bryant make eye contact.

COLLETTE
No. That boy's problem goes far beyond you capabilities. You were brought here to get that child to speak to us. If we're not in the room... it defeats the purpose.

SIMON

You've established zero trust with him. The longer you're in there, the longer this whole process'll take. I'm conducting the interviews from now on. And, I'm doing them alone. Without either of you in the room.

COLLETTE

You're in no position--

SIMON

Or, I leave.

Collette is cut off. She stares at Simon--doesn't have the leverage to call his bluff.

Simon knows he's won.

Collette and Bryant turn, walk away. Simon calls to them.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I'll need all of Peter's files.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - NIGHT

A series of filing cabinets. Many drawers open.

Five, six manila envelopes worth of papers spread out. Heavily redacted reports strewn everywhere. Simon has made himself home.

Under the flickering light of two desk lamps, he pours over a death certificate. Glances up at the clock, speaks into the voice recorder.

SIMON

Thursday. 7:14 PM. Patient's mother died before his first birthday.

Simon examines a photograph. PETER'S BIRTH MOTHER (20) is an emaciated wretch. Thinning hair. Black bags under the eyes. Eleven months ago she turned heads.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Official cause of death: Acute Malnourishment. Father...

He flips through pages, fruitlessly.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Unknown. No mention of him in
anywhere.

Simon rescues a sealed envelope from the sea of papers.

With a letter opener--slices it open.

Unfolds the contents--his eyes question the reality of what he reads. Hits 'STOP' on his voice recorder. The

FOLDED REPORT

Is written in the almost-calligraphic handwriting of Monsignor Ritter. Simon reads it faster than the camera can keep up. Just shards of sentences.

"... a threat to self and others..."

"... stabbed psychologist multiple times..."

"... unnatural conception..."

"... mother raped by succubus..."

"... I fear it is part of Peter's soul..."

"... impossible to exorcise the demonic force..."

"... no hope for salvation..."

BACK TO SCENE

The worry that washes over him is akin to the realization that he's the only sane one in the room.

His hand reaches out for his voice recorder. Hits 'RECORD.'

SIMON (CONT'D)
For the record: these people are
lunatics.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - DAY

Simon never stops working. More files lay open.

A series of sketches penciled by Peter sits atop his files.

Simon speaks into the voice recorder, looks through the picture window at the perfect, blue sky.

SIMON

Friday. 11:13 AM. Patient's
previous social workers all agree
with my initial diagnosis of
schizophrenia.

Heads back to the desk. As he talks, he thumbs through the
SKETCHES

Peter with half his face occluded by shadow--

Peter, but half his face is another man's face--

Peter with hundreds of tiny, screaming faces hovering around
his head--

A drawing of the inside of Peter in which different people
live within him where his major organs should be--

And other variations on the theme.

SIMON (O.C.) (CONT'D)

My primary concern is that the
inconsistent nature of Sister
Collette and Father Bryant will
have only increased the patient's
reliance on his defense mechanisms.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon removes his manuscript from the satchel--

Turns to a section halfway through.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I fear that the patient will not
talk for quite sometime. I'm
preparing for a protracted battle.
As I laid out in Chapter Seven I
will be taking the three-pronged
approach I took--

As Simon speaks the ducts about him come to life.

Almost immediately he feels light headed, drops the voice
recorder--

A HISSING sound of steam rises from the depths to fill his
ears. His eyes strain-- he fights for control-- blinks--

When he opens his eyes again the world is...

INT. ROOM - DAY

SEPIA-TONED.

Simon's POV. He's slumped forward in an ornately carved wooden chair, handcuffed to the chair's arms.

His beating heart races--pounds against his ribs.

Behind that, a distant rush of water never ceases.

A DARK FIGURE hovers at the borders of Simon's perception.

It approaches. As it does...

Simon's heart nears a catastrophic pace. Just when it seems his heart will give out--

SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - DAY

Drenched in sweat, Simon is on the floor. Out cold.

COLLETTE

Doctor! Can you hear us?

BRYANT

Are you Okay?

Simon jerks awake with a painful intake of air. His chest heaves. Simon rolls over.

He looks up at the clergy--has no energy for words though. They stare back at him dumb.

With much effort, Simon pulls himself up off the ground using the table as a crutch. Simon mumbles.

SIMON

Water?

Bryant points to a pitcher on the table.

Wobbly, Simon pulls himself totally upright and pours himself a glass.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Thanks.

Swallows hard. The cool of the water is a poultice to Simon's throat.

Bryant and Collette stare at Simon as he drinks. Simon tries to ignore it, but can't.

SIMON (CONT'D)
It's common for victims of assaults
to experience episodes of...

BRYANT
I'm sure it's just that.

That answer doesn't jive with Simon. This time *he* stares at
the clergy--tries to read into their looks.

Bryant wilts under the scrutiny.

SIMON
There's something you're not tell--

Simon notices that

THE CHAIR

He has been sitting on has identical carvings as the chair in
his flashbacks. He REACTS.

BACK TO SCENE

SIMON (CONT'D)
The chair. It's the--I was here
before, wasn't I?

COLLETTE
Simon--

SIMON
Shhhh. As a child. That's why.
That's why Monsignor Ritter thought
that I'd have insight into Peter.

COLLETTE
Doctor--

SIMON
I'm not experiencing feelings of
paralysis because of the attack.
They're flashbacks. They're
memories I repressed. That's my
defense mechanism.

BRYANT
We can help you. We want to help
you.

That idea is off-putting. Simon packs up his manuscript and
papers, guardedly.

SIMON
I'm perfectly capable of helping
myself, Father.

COLLETTE
 What Father Bryant is trying to
 say, is th--

SIMON
 I said no. The discussion ends
 now.

COLLETTE
 I understand. But--

Simon flashes Collette a look. Collette proceeds carefully.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
 But if you do find yourself in need
 you can always reach us through the
 intercom system.

Glances at the speaker box on the wall.

SIMON
 Thanks for the offer, both of you--
 really; but, I'm late to my
 meeting...

Simon gathers up his belongs. The clergy linger, watch Simon
 stuff his satchel.

BRYANT
 How soon do you think Peter will
 speak?

SIMON
 It's hard to say, but I'm expecting
 it to take considerable time.

Simon's all packed, tosses the strap over his shoulder.

COLLETTE
 As we said, if you ever find
 yourself in the position where a
 fit is coming on and--

SIMON
 As I said, Sister Collette: I'm
 late for my meeting.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PETER'S PADDED ROOM - AFTERNOON

Simon pauses at the doorway, fishes through his satchel for
 his voice recorder, hits 'RECORD', and slides it into his
 shirt pocket.

SIMON
 (whispers)
 Friday. 12:07 PM.

Enters.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A chair and a wooden table have been set up for Simon.

Removes a manila envelope and his manuscript from the satchel, places them on the table.

Not once does Peter acknowledge Simon's existence.

SIMON

Hello, Peter. My name is Simon and I'm here to help you. I've been--

Without looking up. Barely a whisper.

PETER

If you want to help me, get me outta this jacket.

Simon freezes, doesn't know how to react upon hearing Peter speak.

Peter looks up. Bloodshot eyes. Nearly foaming at the mouth due to dehydration. Wan.

PETER (CONT'D)

Please. This thing's so itchy. I just sit in my own piss and sweat all day.

SIMON

Don't Sister Collette and Father Bryant come and clean you?

PETER

Do I smell clean? Does this place look like they clean it?

Simon inspects the dingy cell with his eyes.

PETER (CONT'D)

Just forget it. It doesn't matter. You can't help me, anyway.

SIMON

Why not?

PETER

'Cause you already don't believe me.

SIMON

Of course I do. Why would you say that?

Peter lets out a sigh laced with fatalism as his answer.

SIMON (CONT'D)
What do you mean, I don't believe
you?

PETER
You can't. You're not one of them.

SIMON
Who?

PETER
The priests.

SIMON
What makes you think I'm not?

Each response saps Peter's energy. It's almost as if he's barely awake.

PETER
'Cause you were here the other day
with 'em and you didn't say a word.

SIMON
Couldn't I have been observing?

PETER
You're not dressed like them.

SIMON
Couldn't I be in plain clothes?

Peter's energy ebbs, grits his teeth.

PETER
You don't have a crucifix that I
can see. You have, what I think
is, my case file in that envelope.
And you hit the record button on
your voice recorder in the hall and
put it in your pocket so just in
case if we had some sort of
breakthrough you could reference it
later, but you didn't realize that
I'd be able to see the little, red
light through your shirt.

Simon looks down at his shirt pocket, guiltily.

PETER (CONT'D)
None of those say 'priest' to me.

Simon removes the voice recorder from his pocket, hits the 'STOP' button.

SIMON

You're right. I'm not a priest.
I'm a--

PETER

I know what you are, Simon. Which
is how I know you don't believe me.

SIMON

I might. I haven't heard your
story, yet.

Peter's eyes rest their glare on the manila envelope. Simon
REACTS.

SIMON (CONT'D)

From you. In your own words.

PETER

You've already made up your mind.
You're going to walk out of this
cell and write some medical
evaluation saying that I'm manic-
depressive or schizophrenic or
delusional.

SIMON

Do you think you're any of those
things?

Peter head drops.

PETER

I just wanna get better. I just
gotta get outta here.

SIMON

Why don't you talk to Father Bryant
then? And Sister Collette?

PETER

I try but-- There's a part of me
that can't.

SIMON

But, then why me and not them?

PETER
Because you're different, Simon.
You just don't know it yet.

SIMON
Then let me help you.

PETER
You can't.

A pause.

PETER (CONT'D)
Do know what a homunculus is?

Simon shakes his head.

PETER (CONT'D)
It's a tiny man. That lives inside
you. Imagine you had hundreds of
'em.

SIMON
In you?

PETER
And they just whispered.

SIMON
That's what you hear? Hundreds of
voices? You hear them?

Peter nods.

PETER
All the time.

SIMON
Even now?

PETER
All the time.

SIMON
Are there different voices? Do you
hear more than one voice?

PETER
It's all just the same voice
hundreds of different ways.

SIMON
And they talk to you?

Peter nods.

PETER
Most of the time you can't hear one from the other so it doesn't sound like voices at all. It's more like waves coming and going back to sea.

SIMON
So you never hear what they're saying?

PETER
No. Sometimes I can--if I focus.

SIMON
When you do, what does it sound like?

Another pause.

PETER
Can't you just let me out of this jacket for a bit?

SIMON
What do they say to you?

PETER
They tell me to do things.

SIMON
Like what you did to Monsignor Ritter? Or your psychologist?

PETER
Sometimes they get so clear I can't not listen to them.

Simon's skin crawls under Peter's gaze.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Voice recorder out. Its red light glows. Manuscript out. Peter's files next to that. Simon paces the room, talks.

SIMON

Patient shows classic signs of schizophrenia. Voices. Compulsion to act on thoughts perceived as not his own...

Simon pauses as the ducts shimmy, eyes them suspiciously.

After a second, Simon's thumping heart becomes audible, though barely. He continues.

SIMON (CONT'D)

In addition, during the interview patient exhibited narcissistic tendencies which sometimes accompany schizophrenics.

The loose valve behind him hisses. Steam escapes.

Simon loses his balance. Grabs the table. Breaths purposefully and rhythmically. Looks down; his

HANDS

Are SEPIA-TONED and handcuffed.

The sound of rushing water in the distance can be heard.

Simon SNAPS BACK INTO REALITY...

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Stumbles backward, hits the floor hard.

Breaths burn. He clutches his chest. This must be what a heart attack feels like.

He catches sight of the Intercom. In spite of the crushing pressure in his chest, Simon crawls towards it.

As he drags himself across the floor...

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Simon's POV. SEPIA-TONED. Rushing water. He's handcuffed to that same chair. The Dark Figure lingers on the edge of sight.

Simon SNAPS BACK INTO REALITY.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

The sudden shift causes a wave of nausea to bubble up from his gut. He retches.

He's under the Intercom, climbs painfully and slowly up the wall using the chair and table and anything else he can for leverage.

Heartbeat races. *Thumpthumpthumpthumpthump.*

Just as Simon's finger is about to press the 'CALL' button...

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Simon's POV. SEPIA-TONED. Water rushing. Still handcuffed. Dark Figure distant.

BRYANT (O.S.)
Simon, can you hear us?

Simon SNAPS BACK INTO REALITY.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Bryant and Collette standing over Simon's prone body.

COLLETTE
Doctor!

Simon's eyes blink. Close.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Simon's POV. Dark Figure. Handcuffs. The intensity of his pounding heart is brutal.

COLLETTE (O.S.)
Give yourself over to God. Let Him
inside of you. With his help move
your right arm. Look at it. Good.
Now move it.

No response. Simon just stares at his lifeless arm. His heart sounds as though it might explode.

COLLETTE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You can't force it. You have to
allow it to happen.

Nothing happens with the arm.

The rushing water grows louder, nears.

BRYANT (O.S.)
Trust us. Slow your breathing.

SIMON (O.S.)
I can't!

The sound of rushing water recedes.

SIMON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It's not working!

The Dark Figure charges with lightning speed. Right before we can see its identity...

Simon SNAPS BACK INTO REALITY.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

He's on the floor. Collette and Bryant stand over him.

Blood snails from Simon's nose. He's covered in sweat. Lies beside a pool of his own vomit.

COLLETTE
Gaining control of these flashbacks
will take time.

Simon stares up at her accusingly.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM

Simon enters, satchel around his shoulder. Desk and chair set up in the room already. Plops the satchel down.

Peter looks up. Simon shows Peter that the voice recorder is not in his pocket. Peter doesn't react.

Simon sits down, begins emptying his bag.

PETER
When are you going to let me out of
this thing?

SIMON
As soon as you start talking to
someone other than me.

Peter scoffs.

PETER
So never?

Peter watches Simon finish emptying out his bag.

PETER (CONT'D)
I thought you said they're not your
bosses.

Simon smiles as if to say we're done with this line of
questioning.

SIMON
I've been thinking alot about you
and there are some things I don't
know like, what do you think the
end game is, here?

PETER
How do you mean?

SIMON
Do you talk to Collette and Bryant?
Do they exorcise the demon? What
do you think? Do they let you go?
Do you go back to live with your
aunt and uncle? Do you--

PETER
They kill me.

Simon REACTS.

SIMON
Collette and Bryant?

PETER
And my uncle. And my aunt. They
all allow it.

Simon jots notes.

PETER (CONT'D)
And, if you could ever admit it to
yourself, you.

Simon pauses. Looks up.

SIMON
Me?

PETER
You're like my aunt like that.

SIMON
I want to kill you?

PETER

Mm-hm.

SIMON

Why?

PETER

Because I'm something you don't understand. Because I don't bow down to your expertise. In the end, you have to answer that question for yourself.

SIMON

And that's why Sister Collette and Father Bryant want you dead? Because they don't understand you?

PETER

Collette doesn't think I can be saved.

SIMON

Do you think you can?

PETER

I dunno.

SIMON

Well, do you feel, at least, that your condition's improved since you came here?

PETER

The moment I got here I was forced into a strait jacket and locked in this cell. I think that's a no.

SIMON

I mean mentally... Are the voices-- quieter, at least?

PETER

I told you, they're always there.

Simon makes a detailed note of something on paper. Peter watches. Simon doesn't look from the note he's scribbling.

SIMON

And, what do you--

PETER

How about the voices in your head?

Simon stops writing, looks up.

SIMON

Excuse me?

PETER

I asked about the voices in your head. The flashbacks you've been having.

Simon stares at Peter. Tries to play mind-reader. Can't.

SIMON

Let's get back to you.

Simon has been thrown off his stride. He fumbles through his papers for something--anything... abandons the search, shoots from the hip.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You told me during our last meeting that I'm different than Collette and Bryant. What do you think you meant by that?

Peter tries to intimidate Simon with silence.

PETER

Did you notice?

SIMON

Notice what?

PETER

"Let's get back to you." That was the first time you didn't answer me in the form of a question.

SIMON

Why do you think that is?

Peter smiles mischievously.

PETER

Oh no. (Laughs to himself.) You don't get to do that anymore.

SIMON

This is serious, Peter. It isn't a game.

PETER

Of course it is. And the rules are changing.

Simon begins packing up.

PETER (CONT'D)
What's the matter? You don't feel comfortable answering my questions? I'm just allowed to answer yours?

Simon buckles his satchel closed.

PETER (CONT'D)
I know they're trying to get you to control your flashbacks.

Simon freezes.

SIMON
Who told you that?

No answer from Peter.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Who's talking to you!?

Peter is even more calm.

PETER
You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

SIMON
Who?

Peter thinks for a second.

PETER
No one.

Pissed, Simon storms off for the door.

PETER (CONT'D)
I told you you wouldn't believe me!

SIMON
Well, congratulations. You were right.

PETER
They're trying to get you to fail!
They're going to screw you in the end!

Simon doesn't react. Hand on the doorknob.

PETER (CONT'D)
 I know how to control your
 flashbacks! I'm the one that can
 help you!

Simon turns.

SIMON
 How would you know that?

PETER
 When the fit comes on, calm
 yourself. And once you're inside
 it: follow the voice.

SIMON
 How do you know this?

PETER
 Just follow the voice.

SIMON
 What voice?

Peter doesn't respond.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 What voice?

PETER
 Just listen for it.

SIMON
 What voice!?

PETER
 The voice that's always been there.
 Simon, I wanna help you as much as
 you wanna help me.

SIMON
 You said it yourself, I can't help
 you.

PETER
 You can always let me out of this
 thing.

Simon's face reads: That's not likely.

PETER (CONT'D)
 I've seen where they're going to
 kill me. You want know to how I
 knew, right?

Simon studies Peter's face. Simon is awash in uncertainty.

SIMON
They threatened you?

Peter shakes his head.

PETER
When I saw the place I just knew.

SIMON
How?

PETER
I just did. I could feel it.

SIMON
Where is it?

PETER
At the end of the hall in the six-
hundred wing. There's a room.

SIMON
Do you know the number?

PETER
It doesn't have one.

SIMON
What'll I find there?

PETER
You can find anything in this place
if you look hard enough.

SIMON
Give me specifics. Prove it to me.
Make a believer out of me.

It's Peter's turn to study Simon's face. *Is he baiting me?*

INT. HALLWAY - 600 WING - NIGHT

Simon treads lightly. Floor creaks with each step. Long shadows stretch everywhere.

Gurneys, abandoned and stripped, line the walls. Rust clings to their metallic joints.

At the end of the hall...

An open door awaits Simon. Blinding, ultra-white light pours out obscuring anything inside.

PETER (V.O.)
Okay. I'll tell you.

Simon vanishes inside the light.

INT. THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL - NIGHT

A perfectly white cloth on which we FIND...

Surgical tools lined neatly in a row. Blades. Clamps. Cleavers. Saws. Shears. Needles.

PETER (V.O.)
If they can't cure me. They're gonna cut it outta me.

A hand picks up a brutal-looking, stainless-steel saw, holds it up like a mirror.

In the reflection we see a shard of Simon's face. An eye, nose, and a piece of his mouth.

Simon returns the saw, looks up, inspects the room.

Stainless steel shelving with massive sliding doors warp the room's reflection.

A deep basin to wash off the implements. The faucet drips intermittently.

A WALK-IN COOLER WITH A PADLOCK across the latch.

Unforgiving florescent lighting beats down on Simon.

A series of X-RAYS and CAT scans hang--illuminated from behind. Simon studies them although he has little idea of what they mean.

A darkened office is adjacent, separated by a door and window.

He pauses at a brain scan. Using a steel sliding door as mirror, Simon roots through his hair.

He takes out his voice recorder, glances at the analog clock that ticks above the door.

SIMON

Saturday. 6:47 PM. I'm wondering
if my scans were ever displayed
like this when I was here. If I
find time over the next few days
I'd like to search some of the
administrative offices fo--

Water rushes out of the faucet. Simon jumps.

It makes the same shushing noise the steam has made in the
past.

Simon strides to the basin, turns the hot/cold knobs--nothing
happens. They just spin freely.

Simon is perplexed for a second until... his heartbeat grows
in strength and volume... his eyes lose focus.

Simon REACTS. A fit is coming on.

Stumbles, uses the cart with the surgical implements as a
crutch. All the while the sounds of rushing water and his
heart beat grow.

His eyes dart, search for a call box.

It's across the room. Makes a B-line for it.

Stops.

Fighting to retain control of his body and mind, Simon moves
to an operating table.

Breathes. Calmly slides himself onto the table. Lays down.
Closes his eyes.

The second he does-- The SEPIA-TONED flashback returns.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Simon's POV. Handcuffed to a chair. Dark Figure looms
closely. Simon's thumping heart. Rushing water in the
distance.

PETER (V.O.)

Follow the voice.

His heartbeat quickens. Soon it will be out of control.

PETER (V.O.)
Follow the voice.

The sound of rushing water grows louder, shifts and morphs into...

Guttural, contemptuous whispers. Hundreds of them.

Simon's heart grows louder, faster as well. It's as if Simon's lifeblood and the demonic voices are at war.

Just as Simon's heart can't survive the pace...

DEMONIC VOICES
Control yourself.

His heartbeat slows immediately. 50 BPM.

DEMONIC VOICES (CONT'D)
Now, rip her throat open.

Simon's restrained arm comes to life. His wrist struggles against the handcuff.

DEMONIC VOICES (CONT'D)
Rip her throat open.

Simon whispers uncontrollably in a guttural tongue.

Dark Figure reacts, has only enough time to move closer before--

Simon yanks, splinters the chair's arm, grabs Dark Figure by the neck, brings Dark Figure close--

It's Collette. Simon's hand crushes her larynx.

DEMONIC VOICES (CONT'D)
Send her to the pit.

As Simon squeezes, tears well up inside Collette deadening eyes.

And yet, she smiles.

A SECOND DARK FIGURE charges from the b.g. holding a long, blunt object in its hands.

WHAM! Bryant smashes a monkey wrench across Simon's face.

The blow releases Collette and sends Simon tumbling to the floor. The moment he hits the ground--

INT. THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL - NIGHT

Simon awakes from the flashback. Sweat-soaked, breathing heavily.

Checks his face for blood. Nothing there, yet the vision was so real.

Footsteps from the hall, coming closer.

COLLETTE (O.S.)
Simon! Simon!

Collette and Bryant enter.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

SIMON
Why didn't you ever say you performed the exorcism on me?

Collette and Bryant share a guilty glance.

SIMON (CONT'D)
You thought maybe it wasn't important enough to mention?

COLLETTE
There are things you can't--

SIMON
And what about Peter? What's all this?

COLLETTE
We're not at liberty to say.

Simon can't believe his ears.

SIMON
I don't need you to say a damned thing about what you're planning here. I can see it.

Simon storms out of the room.

COLLETTE
Simon! Simon!

Simon doesn't stop. He's gone. Bryant waits an extra second or two to make sure.

BRYANT

Do you think he's going to?

Collette looks down at table of surgical implements. A pair of shears is missing from the neatly-lined row.

COLLETTE

Mm-hm. I think it worked.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Simon checks the time. It's well past midnight.

Palms the shears. Sneaks out of his room.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT

Peter kneels in the center of his darkened cell. Then...

The door creaks open slowly. It's Simon. Both are barely anything more than a silhouette.

PETER

(whispers)

I've been waiting for you all night.

Simon shushes him, kneels next to Peter, slides the shears out of their hiding place.

SIMON

Hold still. These are sharp.

Simon tries to cut through the jacket's fabric.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Lean forward. Get as much space between you and the jacket as possible.

Peter follows his instructions.

Simon traces a line down the length of the jacket, cutting it open as he goes. It's a slow process.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Watch. I don't want to cut you.

PETER

Where are you going to take me?

SIMON
 First things first. Pull your arm
 forward. Good. Make the fabric as
 taut as possible.

The cutting continues.

PETER
 How are we going to get past
 Collette and Bryant?

SIMON
 They're not going to be able to
 stop us from leaving.

PETER
 What if they--

With a final push Simon slices through the bottom seam.

SIMON
 Done.

Simon tosses the shears aside with a muted clang.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 I haven't seen either of them for
 hours.

He pops up energetically, peers out into the

HALLWAY

The coast is clear.

BACK TO SCENE

Peter: on all fours, depleted. Simon plays lookout.

PETER
 I'm just going to need a second.

SIMON
 You've got to hurry, though.

In the b.g. Peter stands slowly--his curved back growing
 straighter as he does--shrugs off the jacket midway.

Peter is 4 ft. tall...

5 ft. tall...

6 ft. tall...

7 ft. tall...

8 ft. tall...

He's so large, it's inhuman.

Simon still on the lookout, doesn't notice Peter looming over his back.

SIMON (CONT'D)

On our way out we're going to take
an exit I found in the six hundred
wing so we're going to have to be--

Peter raises a clawed hand-- ready to rip Simon's head off from behind--

Simon turns maybe accidentally, maybe out of instinct--

Just in time to see himself get swatted away like a bauble--

Slams into the wall--

Peter lunges forward more simian than human--

Simon rolls-- Darts for the door--

Peter leaps-- Blocks the only exit--

Simon skids to a halt--

Peter bristles with malicious intent-- Springs at Simon--

Simon tries to dodge-- Too slow--

Peter tackles him-- They tumble and roll across the room--

Peter attacks like a vicious animal-- Is all claws and teeth--

Simon's arms are up-- Defensive wounds all over--

During a flurry from Peter, Simon notices--

The shears--

Simon reaches for them-- Can't defend himself as he does--
Pays for it with blood--

Peter's giant arm up-- Poised to attack-- He drives it down--

Simon swings the shears around-- Lands his blow before Peter--

Buries the point in Peter's side--

Peter's back arches-- He howls--

Simon doesn't let up-- Pushes Peter back--

Brandishing the shears-- Pounces-- Blades leading the way--

Drives the scissor's point into Peter continually--

The sound of flesh being punctured is muted only by Simon's choppy breaths and Peter's yelps--

Simon has total control of the situation-- Kneels over Peter's curled body--

Plunges the shears down-- Repeatedly--

Each time he lands an attack, Peter shrinks a little--

8 ft. 7 1/2. 7. 6 1/2. Simon doesn't react.

Just punches with the shears until blood covers everything in the room--including him. It looks black in the absence of light.

Simon finds himself standing in the center of the room, black blood dripping from the shears he clutches in white knuckles. Peter hunched in the corner, barely over five feet tall.

Simon shivers from the adrenaline. As the realization of what has just happened dawns on him, he drops the shears to the floor, looks at the sticky mess on his hands...

And bolts out of the room.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Bryant seated at a table. Collette paces, deep in thought.

Bryant watches, almost afraid to ask the obvious question.

BRYANT
What does it mean?

COLLETTE
Nothing. It doesn't mean anything.

Bryant doesn't know if he believes that.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
We stay the course.

BRYANT
But we--

COLLETTE
Did you put your faith into this plan?

After a second, Bryant's nod comes.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
Then we hold true to it.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Simon's covered in Peter's blood. Arms, hands, face, clothes.

Packs like a madman. Anything that fits into his grasp he shoves into his satchel.

His heart races. *Thump.Thump.Thump.* The whispers return.

Brief flashes from Simon's POV of--

SEPIA-TONED HANDS choking Collette--

The SEPIA-TONED FACE of Collette nearly dead--but smiling.

SEPIA-TONED Bryant slamming a wrench across Simon's pate--

SEPIA-TONED Collette and Bryant chanting--

Simon shakes off the visions each time; is able to quiet his heart and the whispers.

Constantly looks over his shoulder, at the door, up at the clock. Paranoia is setting in.

Done. Turns and leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

He's headed for the front door. Strides so fast they're almost a run. Still the looking over his shoulders.

No one's following him.

He turns a

CORNER

Collette and Bryant are waiting in his path.

He does a 180 without missing a beat. He'll take another route. Reenters the

HALLWAY

Collette and Bryant are on his tail.

COLLETTE

Simon!

Simon quickens his pace.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
Simon, wait for us!

Simon approaches a

STAIRWELL

Descends the stairs.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
We need to talk!

Simon calls back to them without looking.

SIMON
You need to stay away from me is
what you need to do.

BRYANT
Simon.

Simon's at a near run, enters the

CORRIDOR

That leads to the front door. Hastens.

COLLETTE
This isn't something you can run
away from!

Simon approaches the front door.

SIMON
I don't care if my license is
revoked. The procedure you're
trying to get away with here, I'm
reporting it myself.

Pushes the front door, ready to free himself--

But it's locked.

Collette and Bryant are almost on him.

Simon yanks and shakes the door. It doesn't budge.

Then, from inches behind him.

COLLETTE
Simon, leaving is no longer an
option.

Simon turns.

SIMON

I demand to be released.

COLLETTE

I'm sorry. I can't do that.

Simon explodes, gets in their faces. They back away terrified.

SIMON

I don't give a shit about whatever authority you imagine you have here. If you don't open these doors...

Collette and Bryant back themselves into a corner. Simon still marches toward them.

COLLETTE

Simon. Look at yourself. Look at your hands. Where's the blood? Where's Peter's blood?

Simon freezes. There's not a drop on him. He's totally clean.

Now that Simon has paused, Collette repositions herself and with renewed calm, continues.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

There's more going on here than you've been willing to admit to yourself.

Panic sets in. Simon stands silently, trying to process everything when--

He rushes back upstairs.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT

Simon runs for Peter's cell. Swings open the doors.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT

Light from the hallway pours inside. Illuminates...

An empty room.

Simon can't believe his eyes.

No shears. No strait jacket. No blood. No Peter.

COLLETTE

Go back to your room. Rest. Take
as long as you need. A few days.
A week. We're in no rush.

Simon is on the verge of breaking down.

Bryant eyes Collette distrustfully.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Bryant paces. Collette's seated. They're in the middle of a
heated discussion.

BRYANT

You're not listening. Don't you
see? We can still use him. For
the same thing. Only the opposite.

COLLETTE

The opposite?

BRYANT

Where he pul--

COLLETTE

Who would want to see that? Who?

BRYANT

What?

COLLETTE

Think about what your saying. Who
would that attract?

BRYANT

The same people.

Collette shakes her head at his naiveté.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

But what if Ritter--

COLLETTE

Ritter failed. He didn't finish
the prayer. You saw him die.

BRYANT

But, if Simon's able to--

COLLETTE

He's not going to be able to do it!
The demon is part of his soul. It
was so from the day he was born and
it will be so until the day he
dies. Even Ritter thought so.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - NIGHT

Simon stares into the mirror on which he draws a two-columned list. One heading is "Peter". The other is "Me".

HE draws a line vertically to bisect the list. The line travels straight down his face--splits it in two.

BRYANT (V.O.)

You're right, but he kept trying
because--

COLLETTE (V.O.)

Denying something doesn't make the
opposite true.

BACK TO SCENE

Bryant sulks, doesn't have the words to defend his view.
Collette stares him down.

COLLETTE

Simon has something to occupy him.
As long as he sits and waits, by
afternoon, we'll have everything
we've worked for.

Retaining her superiority, Collette leaves.

Bryant timidly creeps over to

RITTER'S SUITCASE

Opens it to find a handgun inside.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM - DAY

Simon stares down at his voice recorder, nervously.

After a weighty moment, he picks it up, and hits 'RECORD'.

SIMON
 Sunday. 9:37 AM. I'm going to
 make my way down--the same way I
 went before--to the front door.
 But--

Sighs fearfully. Heads out of the room.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 We'll see.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Simon inches down the hall. Into the voice recorder:

SIMON
 This is the exact route I took last
 night. To the end of this hallway,
 make a left, turn down the
 stairwell. If it's still there--
 then--

Every so often a PATIENT dressed in a hospital gown passes
 Simon. The Patients' faces are never seen.

Simon reaches the end of the hallway. Makes a left.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Other patients started showing up
 last night.

Reaches the

STAIRWELL

Descends the stairs. His hesitant footfalls echo off the
 walls.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 I'm headed downstairs. Last night
 this stairwell was the one I took
 to get to the front door. It
 should be--

He stops dead in his tracks. Can't find the means to process
 what he sees.

A WALL

In the middle of the stairs--as if it had been supposed to be
 there.

The wall holds dominion over the stairwell--and over Simon.
 Whispers into his voice recorder:

SIMON (CONT'D)
 It's still here.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Collette is deep in prayer.

O.C. the door creaks open. Footsteps.

She finishes with the sign of the cross.

COLLETTE
Father?

BRYANT (O.C.)
Yes.

Collette stands, turns.

COLLETTE
Are you read--

She stops mid-sentence. Reacts... before she composes herself again.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
I see.

Bryant brandishes the handgun.

BRYANT
You say whatever you want. His soul is strong enough.

COLLETTE
Not without our Lord's protection.

BRYANT
We'll find the safe haven Ritter prayed for.

Collette takes a step toward Bryant, hoping to gain the upper hand.

COLLETTE
Let's talk about it before you--

Bryant raises the gun. Collette immediately backs down.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
This isn't you. I doubt you even know how to load that. Let alone use it.

BRYANT
Peter's uncle showed me.

Bryant cocks the gun.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

And I loaded it myself. I insisted. With two bullets. One for you. And one for Peter--if I can't save him.

COLLETTE

You don't know what you're doing. There's no way to save him. Monsignor Ritter didn't finish. He died before... There's no way to save him.

Bryant holds the gun up, aims.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

What about the sixth commandment?

BRYANT

This isn't murder.

BLAM! Pulls the trigger.

The force throws Collette backwards. Lands a crumpled mass against the wall.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

I'm exorcising a demon.

Bryant turns away...

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM

CU on Simon's face as the stress of madness envelopes it.

Shakes. Shivers. Sweats.

He's looking at

A WALL

A wall where the panoramic picture window had been earlier.

Can't not look at it. Can't accept it as reality. Then...

He snaps. Throws a book at it as hard as he can.

SIMON

WHERE IS IT!? Where'd the window go? Where'd it go?

Collapses. Weeps at his own plight.

His hand creeps along the floor, searches for...

The voice recorder.

Spider-like, Simon's fingers find and wrap around it.

Simon hits 'RECORD'. Looks up at the clock.

It's no longer there. Simon REACTS. Into the voice recorder:

SIMON (CONT'D)

I don't know what time or day it is anymore. Everything around me is changing. This place feels like... it's getting smaller. There'll walls everywhere, now. I... I think I might be... I might have died on the way here and now I'm in hell or purgatory or...

Glances up at the mirror. The bifurcated chart entitled "ME/PETER" is filled in.

Under "ME" in bullet points: orphan, Peter only talks to me, exorcism performed by C+B, held here against my will, stabbed by patient.

Under "PETER" in bullet points: orphan, only talks to me, exorcism performed by C+B, held here against his will, stabbed psychologist.

Musters up the courage to stand, walks toward the office door. Opens it. Exits.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Dozens upon dozens of PATIENTS in hospital gowns walk up and down the hallway at a healthy pace. Simon can never get a glimpse of any of their faces.

With the caution of a new driver approaching a merge, Simon steps into the hallway.

His eyes dart everywhere, search for an escape. Whispers into the voice recorder.

SIMON

There's got to be a way out.

As he finishes his sentence, every Patient halts and turns to face Simon.

Each and every one of them is Peter.

ALL

There isn't.

Simon retracts in horror. Turns to the left and right in search of any means of escape. He finds a door.

Throws it open, dives inside.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Simon collapses.

Cries hysterically.

He's gone mad.

Then... In the middle of his wailing...

His heart begins to race. Feels a fit coming on.

SIMON
Oh, please.

Brief flashes from SIMON'S POV--

SEPIA-TONED wrists, handcuffed to an exposed pipe.

BACK TO SCENE

The sound of distant rushing water strengthens.

SIMON (CONT'D)
No.

Brief flashes from SIMON'S POV--

A Dark Figure stands over Simon.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon curls into the fetal position.

The sounds of his quickening heartbeat and the rushing water overtake him and...

INT. ROOM - DAY

SEPIA-TONED. SIMON'S POV.

Simon looks up drowsily at the Dark Figure in front of him. It's Bryant. Blood speckles his face.

Behind him, against the wall, Collette's body lies on the floor.

BRYANT
Can you hear me?

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM

BRYANT

Simon?

Simon is still curled in a ball in the middle of the room.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Can you hear me?

Simon peeks. Bryant stands above him.

SIMON

I need help.

BRYANT

I know.

SIMON

I want you to be honest with me, Father. I think what's happening-- I'm experiencing a mental fracturing--Peter--I'm trying be as direct as I can be. I don't want to reinforce any defense mechanism--

BRYANT

Simon--

SIMON

Please, let me finish, Father. Peter is part of me. He's a projection I've created.

BRYANT

Simon--

SIMON

Please, Father! You don't understand. I think I'm loosing touch with reality. I-- The building is shrinking. You don't understand, there're walls where hallways were. Windows.

BRYANT

No. I do understand. Your world is shrinking.

Simon casts a confused look at Bryant.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Do you remember how Monsignor Ritter described the exorcism process to you?

SIMON

He said-- he said that you were in direct contact with the possessed person's soul.

BRYANT

Correct... That's what's happening here.

Simon tries to comprehend what Bryant is saying.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

I wanted to tell you earlier, but... Simon, Peter's not a part of you. An extension. A projection.

SIMON

What are you saying?

BRYANT

Peter isn't a part of you, Simon. You're a part of Peter. You're part of Peter's soul.

SIMON

What?

BRYANT

The flashbacks you've been having. They're not flashbacks at all. They're happening right now... in the real world.

Simon has no way to process this.

INT. ROOM - DAY- FLASHBACK

Bryant holds the gun up, aims.

COLLETTE

What about the sixth commandment?

BRYANT

This isn't murder.

BLAM! Pulls the trigger. The force throws Collette backwards. Lands a crumpled mass against the wall.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
I'm exorcising a demon.

Bryant turns away...

Towards Peter who is handcuffed to an exposed pipe.

Bryant begins to chant in LATIN with his hand on Peter's forehead. As he touches Peter, the scene is washed in SEPIA-TONE.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM

SIMON
How wouldn't I know I'm not real!?

BRYANT
You are real, Simon. We've been saying all along. The soul is real. But, you're not part of our physical realm. The soul is ephemeral.

Simon reacts with incredulity.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
Simon, please. What I'm about to tell you... You're not only part of Peter's soul. You're the last part of Peter's soul that the demon hasn't destroyed. You're Peter's last remaining defense mechanism.

Simon is up now. Pacing. Angry almost.

SIMON
That doesn't make sense! Even using your own logic! Ritter said that souls are perfect and infinite. You said they're perfect and infinite. If I was part of one then I should be able to go wherever I want, do anything I want to, anytime I want to do it.

BRYANT

A soul under God's protection is infinite, but when you unshackled the demon, you undid the effects of Monsignor Ritter's final exorcism. You let it loose again. And a soul that's possessed closes in on itself until the only thing that remains inside is the demon. It's the opposite of God's love.

SIMON

Why did you let me do it, then?
Why just sit back and watch me let him loose?

BRYANT

Simon, we don't have time.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Simon turns for the door...

But it is already swinging open.

BRYANT (V.O.)

When the demon was first driven deeper into the soul it nearly destroyed you.

Victor... brandishes a box cutter.

Simon tries to back away--has no place to go...

BRYANT (V.O.)

But, you survived.

Victor turns to Simon. Slashes at his face--

Blood splatters on Victor's face.

FADE TO:

PETER'S FACE

REVEAL during the transition that Victor's face is Peter's face--just the hair and eye color are different.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

In the b.g. Peter stands slowly--his curved back growing straighter as he does--shrugs off the jacket midway.

Peter is 4 ft. tall... 6 ft. tall... 8 ft. tall.

BRYANT (V.O.)
And, when you let it loose and the
demon tried again...

Simon's arms are up-- Defensive wounds all over--

During a flurry from Peter, Simon notices--

The shears--

BRYANT (V.O.)
You vanquished it.

Simon swings the shears around-- Lands his blow before Peter--

Buries the point in Peter's side--

Peter's back arches-- He howls--

Simon doesn't let up-- Pushes Peter back--

BRYANT (V.O.)
I prayed for good.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Simon runs for Peter's cell. Swings open the doors.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Light from the hallway pours inside. Illuminates...

An empty room.

BRYANT (V.O.)
But, it escaped.

Simon can't believe his eyes.

No shears. No strait jacket. No blood. No Peter.

INT. HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

Dozens upon dozens of PATIENTS in hospital gowns walk up and down the hallway at a healthy pace. Simon can never get a glimpse of any of their faces.

BRYANT (V.O.)
And now it's regenerating.
Regrouping.

Every Patient halts and turns to face Simon.

Each and every one of them is Peter.

BRYANT (V.O.)
Until it's strong enough to destroy
you once and for all.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM

BRYANT
But, I'm not going to let that
happen. We're going to find the
safe haven Monsignor Ritter prayed
for and we're going to get you
inside it before...

Simon is blank faced.

SIMON
I need to sit down.

He moves towards the corner and squats on the floor, buries his face in his hands as he shakes his head.

BRYANT
Simon--

SIMON
Just shush for a second. Let me--
I need a minute.

A pause. Bryant grows more anxious by the millisecond.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Let's--I can't believe I'm even
saying this--alright. Let's assume
that what you're saying is true.
Now what? Where do we look for
this place? How do we find it?

BRYANT
Before he died, Monsignor Ritter
told me that 'he'll tell us.'

SIMON
"He'll tell us?"

Bryant nods.

SIMON (CONT'D)
How? How will he "tell us"?

BRYANT
He never said.

Simon pulls himself up, heads for the door.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
Simon.

Simon exits into the

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SIMON
I'm going back to my room to think
this all throu--

Simon stops dead in his tracks.

In front of him are two rows of Patients (all Peter) standing
shoulder to shoulder blocking his path.

More Patients arrive, creating and filling in a new row
behind those already formed.

Bryant appears at Simon's side.

BRYANT
We have to find it now.

Simon nods, can't take his eyes off of the amassing army.

As Simon and Bryant hurry in the opposite direction...

The forty plus Patients all follow.

Simon and Bryant pick up their pace to a run.

The Patients don't. They follow without affect.

INT. STAIRWELL

SIMON

What if we can't get to it? How do we know the soul hasn't closed it off?

BRYANT

All I know is that it's going to be something--a room, a wing... something that you can lock the demon out of. That's how Monsignor described it.

Before exiting, Simon casts a quick glance at the top of the stairwell...

Sixty identical Patients stare down at the fleeing pair.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Simon turns the corner sharply. Skids to a halt.

A dozen Patients march shoulder to shoulder towards them.

Simon reverses.

SIMON

This way.

Bryant follows.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You say that you can lock the demon out of it? I think I know what Ritter was describing.

The number of Patients on their tail is ever increasing.

INT. 600 WING

Simon and Bryant rush toward

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

Simon and Bryant enter. Simon slams the door behind him.

600 WING

The mob of Patients approaches methodically.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

Simon gestures quickly to the padlocked walk-in cooler unit.

SIMON
Right there.

BRYANT
It's perfect.

Simon overturns a metal shelving unit, drags it towards the door.

In the stainless steel environ pieces of Simon reflect back at him.

SIMON
Here. Grab the other end.

Bryant doesn't respond.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Father, I need your help. In less than two minutes there's going to be a hundred of them at the door.

Simon waits for Bryant to grab the other end, but Bryant just looks back impotently. Fury rises up in Simon's voice.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Father.

Until...

SIMON (CONT'D)
You can't, can you? Because you're part of the physical world and this is all...

BRYANT
Ephemeral. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Everything here, even you, it's all part of the ephemeral plane. But, I'm of the physical world. If I touch any part of the soul--I die. And if the demon touches me, I become possessed.

Simon thinks on this for a second, quickly barricades the door.

SIMON

Then help me look for the key.

Simon rips open a row of drawers. Finds...

Nothing.

He frantically searches the cabinets.

No key.

The door BOOMS as the legion of Patients on the other side begins battering it. The barricade rattles.

BRYANT

What about in here?

Bryant points to the adjoining darkened office.

Simon tries the door. It's locked.

A second later, Simon smashes the window with a metal stool.

It shatters, but doesn't fall to the ground. Instead, the window hangs mid-air clinging to wire webbing embedded in the glass.

Frustrated, Simon rushes to the surgical implements, finds one that could be used as a wire cutter...

Works quickly to cut a swath of wire out of the pane. Beads of sweat form on Simon's face.

All the while, the Patients batter the door.

Simon finishes, climbs into the

OFFICE

Turns on the light.

Pictures of autopsies and lobotomies mid-procedure hang all over the walls.

Simon searches the desk drawers and filing cabinets.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

The hinges shutter as the door is pummeled. Fear begins to take hold of Bryant.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Simon.

The door frame buckles, creating a gap. The eye of a Patient peers through.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Hurry!

OFFICE

In a cabinet... Simon finds a hanging key.

SIMON

I think I found it!

He opens the door from the other side, rushes into

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

Heads for the walk-in cooler unit.

The Patients heave and pull at the door; are literally tearing it open.

Bryant is at Simon's side. Simon tries the key. It works.

He unlocks the lock, removes it from the latch, swings open the latch, and opens the door to REVEAL...

A half dozen Patients stand inside. They smile deviously as Simon throws open the door.

BRYANT

Close it!

Simon slams the door. But, one of the Patients sticks his hand out--stops it from shutting.

With a yell, Simon forces the door shut, crushing the Patient's fingers in the door.

Simon fumbles with the lock, but finally slides it back onto the latch.

Simon turns to find Bryant in shock.

SIMON

Father?

BRYANT

I was wrong. I was the one who was wrong.

SIMON

Father?

BRYANT
She was--what Sister Collette said--

SIMON
You were wrong about what?

BRYANT
Monsignor Ritter never finished the prayer. He didn't create a haven for you. He died before he could.

SIMON
Maybe--

Dozens and dozens of Patients' hands yank at the door. Their force is just too great. The hinges begin to bend.

BRYANT
Simon, I'm trying to break the bond with Peter now, but... something outside is stopping me.

The Patients have almost dismantled the door enough to enter.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
I've seen what happens to people who are possessed. I--I don't want to live through that.

Bryant's eyes plead.

SIMON
No. I'm not going to touch you.

BRYANT
I need you to... I can't do it myself... There are laws...

SIMON
I don't--

BRYANT
Please.

Simon wavers. Without speaking he says, *alright*.

BRYANT (CONT'D)
Be not afraid. Regardless of whether or not Monsignor Ritter finished his prayer; a human soul is stronger than a hundred demons.

Patients begin squeezing through the hole they have made.

SIMON

Father?

BRYANT

I'm ready.

Simon reaches to touch Bryant's hand.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord
is with thee. Blessed art thou
among women and blessed is the
fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy
Mary, Mother of God, pray for us
sinners now, and at the hour of our
death.

Simon touches Bryant. Bryant closes his eyes.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Amen.

After a moment, Bryant opens his eyes again.

Nothing has happened. Simon just stares dumbly back at him.

SIMON

I thought you said you'd...

As Bryant talks, he grows manic and crazed.

BRYANT

I've been so blind. You're Peter's
defense mechanism. You said it
when we first made contact. You
said it to the monsignor!

Simon backs away, unnerved by Bryant's antic disposition.

BRYANT (CONT'D)

Don't you see?! You said it
yourself: defense mechanisms! They
aren't part of the soul. They're
part of the mind! The mind is no
match for a demon's powers.
There's no hope for you or him or
me. We're all doomed.

A swarm of arms and hands grab Bryant, drag him backwards.

He fights and kicks against their superior numbers and force.

As Bryant lets loose a cry for help, one of the Patients
drives his entire arm down Bryant's throat.

Blood erupts from inside Bryant.

Simon turns to run...

But more and more Patients press their way inside the room.

Simon grabs a heavy surgical implement, swings it wildly hoping to keep the mob at bay.

It doesn't work. They move in undeterred.

He eyes a fan connected to the duct above.

He jumps up onto the table, yanks off the exhaust fan, climbs into the ducts.

Hands pull at him. He kicks them off. Crawls inside

THE DUCTS

Simon shimmies as quickly as possible.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

Amongst the dying gurgles of Bryant one... three... seven Patients leap up and hang from the duct work.

THE DUCTS

Simon panics, moves as the ducts buckle.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

The ducts bend and whine as bolts and sheet metal stretch.

THE DUCTS

Simon hustles.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

The duct tumbles to the ground; a bent wreck.

The Patients reach inside for Simon...

But he isn't there. They all look up into

THE DUCTS

Simon pins his arms and legs to the side, suspends himself vertically. Sweat streams down his chest and forehead.

THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL

The Patients leap ten feet into the air, clasping onto the ducts, climb into them following Simon.

THE DUCTS

Simon climbs painfully. Reaches a

RIDGE

Below him a trio of Patients near. More are on their way.

Simon races ahead, deeper into

THE DUCTS

Pumps his elbows and knees.

The Patients close in on him.

Simon makes it to a

T-SECTION

Begins to turn right, but Patients crawl towards him.

He turns left. Patients there, as well.

He's trapped.

For a second contemplates giving up. But, instead...

Throws his weight up and down with as much force as he can manage.

The duct gives a little.

He does it again. The ducts shift considerably.

The Patients near.

Three. More. Times. Simon throws his weight.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - ASYLUM

The section of duct work holding Simon slams onto the floor.

He crawls out. It takes a second to acclimate himself.

Simon rushes to the door, opens it...

But, a solid wall blocks his exit. There's no way out.

Overhead, the Patients in the duct work near.

Simon panics, rushes back and forth looking for anything that can possibly help him--

On the table in the room sits his manuscript, satchel, and voice recorder.

He tosses the satchel aside. It flops against the wall blocking his escape.

As if it were trash, Simon sweeps his manuscript to the floor, flips the table onto its side.

Stomps down hard on one of the legs, working frantically to break it off. It splinters.

He grabs the club off of the ground, brandishes the weapon.

Noises from the ducts grow louder. Simon steels himself.

Stares at the ducts, ready. The waiting gets to him.

He looks away for a second, glances at the doorway.

Simon REACTS to something O.S.

INT. PETER'S PADDED ROOM - FLASHBACK

PETER
You can find anything in this place
if you look hard enough.

BACK TO SCENE

CLOSE ON Simon's satchel.

The satchel's ID tag faces Simon. PUSH IN on the ID tag.

PETER (V.O.)
Follow the voice... Just follow
the voice.

The tag's flowing letters read:

"For Simon. There's even a spot for that pretentious voice recorder of yours."

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - FLASHBACK

Simon reads a report written by Ritter...

His handwriting is almost-calligraphic.

It's the same handwriting on the ID tag.

BACK TO SCENE

Simon can't believe it.

SIMON
Ritter.

CLOSE ON the satchel's buckles.

BRYANT (V.O.)

All I know is that it's going to be something--a room, a wing... something that you can lock. That's how the monsignor described it.

Simon smiles to himself.

The noise from above snaps him out of his momentary daze.

Simon darts to the mess of annotated papers on the floor.

Searches them for his... Voice Recorder!

Hits 'ERASE ALL'. The recorder's LCD display reads: "Erasing 77 files." A countdown begins. "77. 76. 75..."

Simon rushes back to the satchel, grabs the cudgel off the ground, readies himself for a fight.

Just as he does, a Patient drops from the opened duct. More will be here in seconds.

LCD DISPLAY

"63. 62. 61. 60..."

BACK TO SCENE

The Patient lifts himself up, starts towards Simon.

Simon and the Patient tussle.

Three more Patients drop from the duct.

LCD DISPLAY

"51. 50. 49. 48..."

BACK TO SCENE

Simon beats back the Patient with the weapon, but the three others lurch towards him.

LCD DISPLAY

"33. 32. 31. 30..."

BACK TO SCENE

The Patients grab at the voice recorder. Outnumbered, Simon can't defend it. It tumbles to the floor.

Simon swings his weapon wildly, beats back the hands of reaching Patients, reclaims the recorder.

LCD DISPLAY

"21. 20. 19. 18..."

BACK TO SCENE

A Patient tackles Simon from behind, reaches for the voice recorder.

Simon protects it, shrugs the Patient off his back.

LCD DISPLAY

"12. 11. 10. 9..."

BACK TO SCENE

More Patients fall. Those Patients that are there move in.

LCD DISPLAY

"3. 2. 1... FOLDER CLEARED"

BACK TO SCENE

The Patients attack.

Amidst the melee the voice recorder beeps. Simon hits 'RECORD'. The tone/pace of Simon's voice says: my time is almost up.

SIMON

Focus on this voice. This is your voice. Find it like a ship on the water. Hang onto it so you don't drown. Let my voice keep you afloat.

A bunch of Patients grip Simon's neck and arms and chest.

He head butts one, struggles to get free. Can't.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Focus on this! The demon wants you because you have unequalled power inside. Your soul is infinite and perfect. Keep it for yourself.

More arrive. The room is full. They continue to descend upon him.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 (struggling)
 Your identity--how you act, who you
 are--is your choice.

Simon hits 'STOP' and then 'LOOP'.

He strains against the mob's strength and numbers, reaches
 the satchel.

As he does, his voice escapes from the recorder's tiny
 speaker.

SIMON'S VOICE
 Focus on this voice. This is your
 voice. Find it like a ship on the
 water. Hang onto it so you don't
 drown. Let my voice keep you
 afloat...

Simon slides the voice recorder into the satchel's pocket.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)
 Focus on this! The demon wants you
 because you have unequalled power
 inside. Your soul is infinite and
 perfect. Keep it for yourself...

Just as Simon snaps the satchel's buckles closed--

The Patients overwhelm him.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)
 Your identity--how you act, who you
 are--is your choice.

SIMON'S FACE

Is serene in death.

FADE TO:

PETER'S FACE

Quiet. Unconscious. Serene.

PAN OUT to reveal

INT. BOILER ROOM - DAY

This is the room in which all of Simon's "flashbacks" have
 occurred. The only sound: a muted shuffling O.S.

Peter's wrists are handcuffed to an exposed pipe.

A dirty mirror hangs on a brick wall over a dingy basin.

Dusty rectangular tins of olive oil are packed tightly on cheap, sheet metal shelves.

Next to a boiler and water heater, tucked away in the corner of the room, stands a video camera on a tripod. It's not on.

A small, non-functional window lets light in.

REVEAL the source of the muted shuffling sound to be... Bryant's convulsing body on the cement floor.

A bullet hole in the wall. Blood splattered around it. Collette's body is nowhere to be found, though.

Slowly PUSH IN on Peter. As we do...

A guttural, contemptuous whisper hovers on the edge of perception. And then another. And another. Each adds infinitesimally to the volume.

Another whisper. And a dozen more. A dozen dozen. Swells. Infects everything it touches. The inhuman noise grows oceanic in its scope.

Just as it is about to overwhelm us, *become* us...

Peter's bloodshot eyes jet open. He SCREAMS and writhes in agony as the last remaining vestige of humanity is destroyed inside.

His skin is so taut it might rip.

His veins bulge. Black blood pulses through his jugular.

His scream seems to last forever.

The handcuffs hinder any movement of Peter's arms. Peter jerks and yanks with inhuman strength, rips the handcuff's chain in two, frees himself.

He tries to stand. Tumbles forward as the whispers rush forth.

Uses the basin as a crutch. His breathing is a jagged thing.

IN THE MIRROR

Peter is gaunt, haggard. Looks like hell.

BACK TO SCENE

The whispers won't allow him any peace--

He lashes out at his reflection with a closed fist--
 Glass embeds in his knuckles--
 Just a guillotine-like swath of mirror hangs by a thread--
 Reflects back only a piece of Peter's face--
 Peter's eyes focus on his incomplete reflection--
 He tries to calm his breathing, calm his being in spite of
 the noise inside him. It's nearly impossible...
 But, as he does, deep within the inhuman sound he begins to
 hear a voice... a person's voice... Simon's voice.

SIMON'S VOICE

Focus on this voice. This is your
 voice. Find it like a ship on the
 water. Hang onto it so you don't
 drown. Let my voice keep you
 afloat...

Peter nearly swoons. Bloody knuckles grip the basin's lip.
 Simon's voice recedes. The whispers flow forth.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Focus on this!

Peter snaps back-- His eyes focus on the mirror.
 Simon's voice is still there... grows stronger with each
 passing second. As it does, the demonic whispers retreat.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)

The demon wants you because you
 have unequalled power inside.

Peter grows confident, even hopeful. His face shows it.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Your soul is infinite and perfect.
 Keep it for yourself...

The black blood in his jugular dissipates.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Your identity--how you act, who you
 are--is your choice.

Not a whisper left. Only Simon's voice.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Focus on this voice. This is your voice. Find it like a ship on the water. Hang onto it so you don't drown. Let my voice keep you afloat...

It grows quieter and quieter until it fades away.

Peter can't believe that, for the first time in his life, he doesn't hear the voices.

A smile stretches across his face.

He is truly happy. He can't remember ever feeling this free.

He laughs. Heartily.

The joy he feels is impervious to interference. Until...

Bryant grunts behind him. Peter turns-- he hadn't noticed the priest before.

Peter approaches cautiously. His face is marked with pity.

He stands over Bryant, inspects the convulsing priest.

Bryant is in the throes of a violent seizure-- claws at his eyes and face and throat--

Black blood spurts through his jugular in fits--

He's turning. Peter knows it, backs away--

Notices the gun on the floor, bends down to pick it up--

Aims it at Bryant--

Stands for a moment at the ready... and then lowers the gun.

Peter cautiously kneels down at Bryant's side.

The black blood has grown much stronger in just thirty seconds.

Peter knows what he must do, stands, aims the gun.

A pause as Peter debates internally if he'll be able to--

Bryant's body LAUNCHES itself off the ground at Peter--

Slams into Peter-- Sends him reeling to the floor--

Peter pulls the trigger-- BLAM!

Bryant falls to the ground. Dead.

Peter makes the sign of the cross and whispers a prayer to himself.

Finished, Peter stands slowly and painfully, turns to leave.

But, Collette stands in his way. A monkey wrench in her hand. Blood rims her mouth. Her gut shot oozes. The only thing keeping her upright is her faith.

COLLETTE

I know you thought what you did was noble, but a person who dies while in the grips of possession--their soul is damned.

Peter casts a pitiful glance Bryant's way.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

They say the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

WHAM! Out of nowhere, she swings the wrench like a bat, clobbers Peter. The side of his body slams into the wall.

Peter moans and rolls on the floor, clutches his arm.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

I pray the opposite is true. That the road to heaven is paved with evil intentions.

Slowly; methodically, Collette hobbles over to the tripod, turns on the

VIDEO CAMERA

Records Peter in the fetal position, holding his broken arm.

BACK TO SCENE

Collette makes her way back over to Peter, stands over him. He's in too much pain to look up.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,
died on the Cross, was buried, and
rose again three days later to
ascend into Heaven. Do you know
what for?

When Peter doesn't answer she nudges him gently with her
foot.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Peter? I'm sorry, but I don't have
much time left.

She drops the head of the wrench onto Peter's foot. It
shatters. He SCREAMS! Begs:

PETER

Please. Why? Why? Please, no
more. Please.

COLLETTE

He died so that men of the cloth
could deny the power of evil. So
that people like your pathetic aunt
could question God, himself! You
sound like her right now. "Why?
Why? Why? Tell me. Why? Why?"
Because! God willed it! You don't
get to ask, why? None of us are
important enough for that. We've
all got to take our lumps.

She slams the wrench down on his knee. The pain races
through his body like lightning.

She kneels down beside him. It's almost the Pieta.

Peter's mouth works automatically.

PETER

Please, stop. Please.

COLLETTE

I'm sorry Peter, but I can't. You
have something invaluable inside
you.

She strokes Peter's tear-soaked face.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

I had to have explained it to
Monsignor Ritter a hundred times,
but he wouldn't listen. He left me
no other option.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Peter is seated in a chair flanked by Collette and Bryant who hold him steady; Peter's Uncle next to them. Peter's Aunt sobs O.C.

Ritter addresses Collette and Bryant gravely.

RITTER

Make sure you hold him secure.

REVEAL as Ritter performs the benediction Collette lets Peter go.

Peter leans forward, tears Ritter's neck open with his teeth.

INT. BOILER ROOM - DAY

COLLETTE

A priest holds up the bread and wine during Mass, proclaims, "This is my blood, this is my body." But he houses doubt within his heart. And so, Our Lord changes the bread and wine to human flesh and blood while they are still his hands. In front of the entire congregation! And scientists come along and try to disprove it over and over again. And fail. Or a hundred thousand people in Fatima witness the sun dance and plummet and change color. A hundred thousand people saw this! News reporters were there. And it happens again seventy years later in Texas. And then again in Georgia. And still people close their hearts to God clinging to news of molestation and scandal.

She stands, uses the wrench as a crutch.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

I told Ritter and Bryant both, but they wouldn't listen: Miracles don't make people believe. Evil does.

Swings the wrench like a golf club. The force lifts Peter off the ground.

He crashes into the water heater. The metal dents and cracks letting out a thin line of hissing steam.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

And you have an evil inside you that is inhuman.

Gets in his face.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Let. It. Out. For the world to see.

Peter stares defiantly into Collette's eyes.

PETER

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us...

Collette smiles to herself, brandishes the wrench.

COLLETTE

I know your aunt and uncle tried to raise you to be a good Christian. But, the thing inside you...

Collette uses the wrench to push Peter's face against the cracked section of the heater. Peter cries out as the metal cuts him and the steam sears him.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

It won't let you turn the other cheek.

CLOSE ON Peter's face as the pain ravages his visage. The hissing sound is so close to his ears that it overtakes him.

He prays under his breath at a machine gun pace as Collette presses his flesh to the burning metal...

Peter focuses on his prayer and the hissing sound disappears.

PETER

... kingdom come, thy will be done
on Earth as it is...

COLLETTE

My only hope is that after hundreds
of thousands return to the church,
Jesus Christ will forgive me for
this.

Collette presses harder.

Peter screams! The hissing sound returns with strength.
Becomes...

Whispers. Contemptuous, guttural whispers.

Tears roll down Peter's face.

Collette releases him, turns to the far wall.

The whispers grow in intensity. Peter clutches his ears. It
does no good.

On their own, Peter's bones mend, right themselves with
agonizing pops and cracks and grinding.

With her bare hands, Collette rips the guillotine-shaped
shard of glass from the mirror. Blood trickles down from her
palms. She carries it towards Peter, awkwardly.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Inside of you, you have the grace
of God and the power of Satan.

Peter watches Collette approach. His entire reflection stares
back at him in the glass. The whispers are overwhelming.

She kicks him onto his back. Peter's so weak he can't resist.

Collette lifts up the shard, ready to plunge it into Peter's
heart.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Give the world a reason to pray.
Give the world reason to despair.

She drives the point down with the force to tear him asunder.

At the last second, Peter raises his hand...

The mirror explodes. Glass shatters everywhere.

As if propelled by an energy not his own, Peter stands.

Collette smiles.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
Make martyrs of us both.

Peter gestures with his arm. It sends Collette flying through the air, telekinetically.

She's pinned against the wall--

Peter's body, erect and powerful, is hellbent on destroying Collette.

But, Peter's face is horrified at what he is doing.

He stands in the center of the room. Fighting himself.

Behind him, on the shelves, all of the olive oil tins shake and rattle violently.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
It'll do what it wants to.

VWOOSH! In an instant, the oil tins shoot across the room.

Slam into Collette at 40 mph. What remains of her body tumbles to the ground.

The demonic voices in Peter's head pulse and blare.

He kneels down-- It's as if they pierce his entire being--

Struggles to find Simon's voice in the cacophony.

It takes time but...

SIMON'S VOICE
... so you don't drown. Let my
voice keep you afloat...

Peter's eyes strain as he attempts to quiet the demonic voices--

All the while Simon's voice loops. Grows stronger.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Focus on this! The demon wants you
because you have unequalled power
inside. Your soul is infinite and
perfect. Keep it for yourself...

And the demonic voices fade--

And fade...

And fade...

But...

They never totally quiet. Instead they meet and share equal reign inside Peter's head.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Your identity--how you act, who you
are--is your choice.

Simon's voice loops once more as the whispers babble like running water along with it.

SIMON'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Focus on this voice. This is your
voice. Find it like a ship on the
water.

Footsteps from upstairs.

PETER'S UNCLE (O.S.)
Peter?!

The footsteps creep above-- grow nearer--

Peter looks towards the stairs fearfully--

The demonic whispers never cease. Neither does

SIMON'S VOICE
Hang onto it so you don't drown.
Let my voice keep you afloat...
Focus on this! The demon wants you
because you have unequalled power
inside.

STAIRWAY

Peter's Uncle descends the stairs into the

BOILER ROOM

He eyes the carnage with disbelief.

Finds Peter on his hands and knees amongst shattered glass.

PETER'S UNCLE
My god.

Peter doesn't look up, closes his eyes. Can't bring himself to acknowledge the existence of anyone, let alone his surrogate father.

SIMON'S VOICE
Your soul is infinite and perfect.
Keep it for yourself...

PETER'S UNCLE
Peter? Peter?

Peter's Uncle stands over him, puts his hand on Peter's back.

PETER'S UNCLE (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

Peter's eyes open. He looks down at the shattered mirror that litters the ground.

SIMON'S VOICE
Your identity--how you act, who you
are--is your choice.

Peter's reflection is splintered. A thousand pieces.

Neither complete, nor whole.

As we FADE TO BLACK

With the tenderness that accompanies pity and love, Peter's Uncle picks Peter up off of the ground, cradles Peter's body in his arms, and carries him out of the place.

Simon's voice hovers on the peripherals of our perception.

So do the whispers.